

Story #253 (Tape #5, Summer 1964) Narrator: Mehmet Altaç

Location: Collected at Sinop Penitentiary,
but informant was from Yukarı
Asma Köy, kaza at Bor, Province
of Niğde.

Date: August 1964

Neither in Heaven Nor on Earth

One day while Incili Çavuş was serving in the palace, he came upon a room where the padişah was making love to one of his wives. Instead of going away, Incili Çavuş watched through a crack in the door. Afterwards his wife told the padişah that Incili Çavuş had been looking at them, and he asked, "How do you know this?"

"I saw him watching through a crack in the door," she said.

"If he did, I shall learn of it," said the ruler, "and I shall punish him." Later that day the padişah said to Incili Çavuş, "Incili, go out to the market and buy my wife Fatma a pair of shoes."

Incili Çavuş went to the market and he bought a beautiful pair of shoes with paper soles. When he returned with them, the padişah looked at them and then said, "Incili, how long do you think paper-soled shoes will last my wife?"

"Your majesty," said Incili Çavuş, "if your wife always keeps her feet in the position I saw them earlier today, she could wear these shoes all the rest of her life!"

The padişah was very angry with Incili Çavuş and to punish him, he ordered, "You will be seen neither in heaven nor on earth, and you will be found neither among the faithful nor among the infidels."

"Yes, efendi," said Incili, and he left the padişah's presence.

To carry out the padişah's orders, he climbed a nearby mountain and found a Yürük tribe, and near them he had his tent put up. The ends of

the tent were open to allow ropes tied to two trees to pass through, and from these ropes Incili had a hammock slung. At night he slept in that hammock, and during the day he sat on it.

After several days the padişah said to some of his attendants, "Go and search for Incili Çavuş, and when you find him, bring him to me." It took the attendants many days to find Incili Çavuş, but at last they searched the mountain slopes and found him near the Yürük camp. They took him back to the palace, and there the padişah questioned him: "Didn't I tell you to be seen neither in heaven nor on earth? Didn't I tell you not to be found either among the faithful or among the infidels? Why didn't you obey my orders?"

"Your majesty, I did obey your orders. I was staying with Yürüks, who are not faithful Moslems, for they have no mosque; neither are they infidels, for they have no church or cross. I slung my hammock between two trees, and I lived in that hammock day and night. In that way I was not on the earth, but neither was I in heaven."

When the padişah heard this explanation, he was greatly pleased, and so he pardoned Incili Çavuş.

Agu #24

Baron